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QUEENS COUPLE ARRESTED
IN ALLEGED FAKE INVOICE MASS-MAIL SCAM

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and PHIL BARTLETT, Acting Inspector-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Postal Inspection Service, announced the arrests today of MICHAEL SCHLUSSEL and ANA-MARIA SAEGIU for an alleged mail fraud and money laundering scheme in which invoice-style solicitations for fluorescent light bulbs were sent to thousands of companies across the country in an effort to fool the companies into paying for products they had not ordered and did not receive. According to the Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court:

SCHLUSSEL and SAEGIU operated a collections agency called "Alden Curtis and Michaels, Ltd." They were therefore aware that, due to the volume of invoices processed by most businesses, businesses sometimes will pay invoices without verifying that the goods were actually delivered, especially in situations where the invoice is for less than \$1,000. As part of their scam, SCHLUSSEL and SAEGIU mass-mailed thousands of solicitations styled as invoices in the amount of \$995 for fluorescent light bulbs.

SCHLUSSEL and SAEGIU established several shell companies for the purpose of sending the invoice-style solicitations, with return addresses at mailboxes they opened at commercial mail receiving agencies. To avoid using a mail meter that could be traced, the defendants sent the mass mailings with individual stamps. To conceal the control of the funds, the checks were then double-endorsed and cashed into the account of

